857
522

Ohi, ohi, ohi, away,
To-day it is Ash-Wednesday,
Girls, you better drag the trunk
Onto the nearest main road.

857 The military touch displayed in these two customs,[1] is
[212] the explanation of the fact that Hungarian children grew so fond of them, although they are purely Christian — that is fairly recent — customs. The spelling is also of Western origin; it is only here that the Hungarians learnt Western writing. It is true that this was very long ago : already in 1055 Hungarian words were written with Latin letters. Their ancient writing, which the Hungarians had brought with them from the East, had been runes traced from right to left. Bonfinio, the court historian of King Mathias, made this comment on it : — «with few signs they express much meaning». The oldest document of this ancient Hungarian writing dates from 1515. But the ancient runes were gradually forgotten, and the Hungarians also enlisted as Saint Gregory's knights
• [867] and Saint Blase's spelling soldiers. — They learnt a great many good and beautiful things. They learnt the Golden ABC, which had arranged in alphabetical order all the highest Christian moral teachings, and nothing was left out of this collection ! This is how it began :

a : all that you do not want for yourself
you must not do it to others !

b : burden the servants of your house
as much as you want to be burdened yourself !

When the Protestant students of Sárospatak (a historic Hungarian college) grew tired of these perpetual moral teachings, they made parodies of these verses. This is what they invented for the letters :

40 [1] [i.e. the recruiting of truants for their schools and the singing of spelling rhymes -- Analyst]